

Christian Courier

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Honduran translates reformational vision into Spanish

Christianity is not for weaklings, says author-lawyer

Bert Witvoet

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Guillermo Fiallos, a recently landed immigrant from Honduras, has just finished translating into Spanish a Canadian university textbook on a Christian worldview. The book, *The Transforming Vision*, co-authored by Brian Walsh and Richard Middleton, has already been translated into Korean, French and Indonesian.

Why would a 30-ish Roman Catholic lawyer from Honduras, who himself has written and published two novels and a study of the social doctrine of the church, be so interested in spending two months of a hot Canadian summer translating a 270-page book? Fiallos gives three reasons.

"After I came to Canada five months ago, it took a long time to get landed immigrant status. I needed to do something for God's kingdom in the meantime," he says. Wybe Bylsma, a Cobourg, Ont., real estate agent with a heart burning for the reformation of society, gave Fiallos "a golden opportunity" by encouraging him to read *The Transforming Vision*.

After reading the book, Fiallos had his second reason: he should make this book accessible to Christian Spanish-speaking students who want to broaden their outlook.

Up and sideways

The third reason is that Fiallos shares Bylsma's conviction that there should be a network of Christian thinkers in the world who want to look up to God and stand next to their neighbor.

Coming from a predominant-

ly Catholic country that has seen the growth of fundamentalist Christianity in recent decades, Fiallos says that most Christian intellectuals don't understand the significance of the cross with its vertical and horizontal beam.

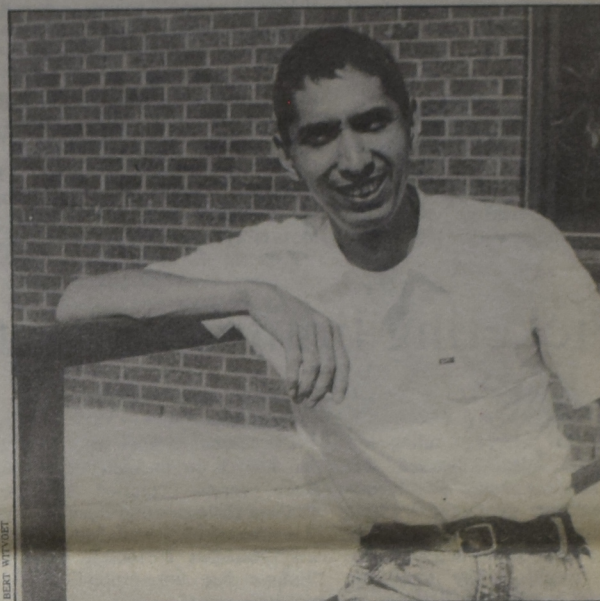
"To follow the cross is to find the point of equilibrium between our relationship with God and with people," says Fiallos while moving his hand upward and sideways.

"Fundamentalist Christians concern themselves only with the vertical relationship with God and humanist Christians only with the horizontal. This book offers an alternative to that."

"One of the church fathers gave us the expression 'Ora et Labora,'" say Fiallos. "We must pray and work in this world."

Fiallos reluctantly told a story that Bylsma encouraged

See POOR p. 2...



Guillermo Fiallos

Ontario court measures out space for abortion pickets



How close should they be?

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO — In a groundbreaking decision Mr. Justice George Adams has ruled that

anti-abortion demonstrators and counsellors must stay certain fixed distances from 23 named locations of abortion clinics and

government, through its Attorney-General Marion Boyd, brought a court case asking for restrictions on picketing after it

the offices of certain doctors who perform abortions in Ontario.

Although the decision is the most far-reaching restriction on abortion picketers in Canada, both sides in the controversy have applauded the judge's fairness in the decision, though hard-liners on both sides are unhappy that the judge did not give them everything they wanted.

The Ontario

received the report of a task force it appointed to study access to abortion services. The study was prompted by the vigorous actions of Operation Rescue in Toronto and Vancouver, the destruction by fire of Dr. Henry Morgenthau's abortion clinic in Toronto and the killing of two doctors who had performed abortions in Florida.

In filing the suit Boyd cited vandalism, chemical attacks, blockades and verbal harassment by pro-lifers outside of abortion clinics, hospitals and doctors' homes. She asked for \$500,000 in damages against 18 named pro-life demonstrators. She called the temporary injunction a victory for the "safety and privacy of

women."

In January the judge heard 13 days of testimony on the question whether a temporary injunction should be granted. A court date for arguments on the lawsuit has not been set, and it is not expected to take place for another two years.

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News

MP wants government to decrease so that charity may increase

Jane Ouwehand

CHILLIWACK, B.C. — The message that Chuck Strahl, Member of Parliament for Fraser Valley East, sends to local charities is, "You are doing a good job. You play an important role in this community."

A member of the Reform Party, Strahl predicts that as the government struggles to balance the budget, social spending will be cut and charities will have to play a bigger role in helping the

poor. "We're going to see the pendulum swing back from 'the government will supply' to 'the family and charitable organizations will supply,'" he says.

Strahl does not mouth empty phrases; he donates 10 per cent of his salary to those groups he feels have wide support in the riding.

Mennonite Central Committee's Rwanda Relief Fund, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, the Salvation Army; all these have received Strahl's support.

"I try to strike a balance between Christian charities and community charitable organizations, about half and half so far," he says. "And this is separate from my tithe to the church. That's a separate issue."

Bigger role for community groups

"There are going to be huge changes," Strahl asserts. "We'll have to provide without the current level of government involvement." He feels that is not

all bad. "It used to be that if a family was short of food, there would be people going next door helping their neighbor. Now the attitude seems to be 'What will the government do?'"

In the future, the traditional ways of people helping people will become more important. There will be an increasing role for the family. Churches and community organizations are more suited to helping people in

See NO p.5...



Chuck Strahl

Picketing limited but not prohibited, says lawyer

...continued from p. 1

In his 548-page ruling Mr. Justice Adams directed that pickets must stay nine metres away from one abortion clinic in Toronto and 18 metres away from two others. They must stay 150 metres away from the homes of nine named doctors in London, North Bay, Brantford and Kingston. However, the judge placed no restriction on picketing at hospitals where abortions are performed, which the government had requested.

The judge banned signs saying "Abortion Butcher Sent to Jail," reported the *Globe and Mail*. The judge said that the no-picket zones around abortion clinics would give pregnant women "the same choice as any other pedestrian to accept a pamphlet, to examine a picket sign and listen or not listen to

verbal expression."

The *Toronto Star* reported that lawyer for the defendants Peter Jervis "praised the decision for protecting freedom of expression." Jervis said on television that the judge has "limited but not prohibited" picketing.

CBC's Lorna Jackson reported on radio that the judge said that sometimes the right to privacy overrides the right to freedom of expression. At issue is the difference between counselling and harassment.

More creative ways

But in a phone interview with *Christian Courier* Sabine McLuhan, representing the Campaign Life Coalition, condemned the decision and added that the challenge now is for protestors and counsellors to

come up with more creative ways to stop women "from killing their unborn babies." She said that many women have filed affidavits in the lawsuit saying that they are very happy that counsellors persuaded them

to bring their baby to birth.

McLuhan added that this decision has definite implications for the picketing of labor unions in strike situations. She lamented that unions did not support the pro-life position

against picketing and thereby safeguard their own position. This case is not about abortion but about politics, she said. "We have taken a position that is politically unpopular."

Poor man got more compensation than the law required

...continued from p. 1

him to tell as an example of how he himself tried to integrate "the vertical and the horizontal" when he served as a legal advisor to a transportation company.

A poor man who had invested all his earnings into merchandise rode a bus with his merchandise. The bus had an accident. No one was critically injured, but all the goods were burnt. The company, which had only liability insurance, paid the man 100 lempiras, whereas his loss had been 2,000 lempiras.

Fiallos talked to the manager of the company, whom he describes as "a hard-hearted, Sunday Christian."

"Legally we're in the right," Fiallos told the manager. "But there is also the matter of equity. We should pay him more."

Fiallos doesn't know why, but the manager changed his mind and the company ended up giving the man more money.

The approach which he took

as legal advisor comes from Fiallos' conviction that "God is the door, the centre and the window of your life." But making God "the Alpha and the Omega" is not easy, says Fiallos.

Need for strength

"Some people say that if you're a Christian, you must be a weak person who needs a crutch to go through life. But the opposite is true. Christianity is for real men and real women," he says. "To walk against the ways of the world requires a lot of strength and willpower."

Coming to Canada has helped Fiallos understand that Protestant churches can be serious about their calling. His experience with "instant churches" formed around populist leaders had made him suspicious of Protestantism. He did not like the fundamentalist's lack of concern for social problems.

Now that *The Transforming Vision* has been translated into Spanish, the next step will be to find a publisher, probably in Mexico, as well as financial backing.

Fiallos is temporarily returning to Honduras to work at registering land and determining its use, besides acting as marketing manager of a company offering human resources.

When he returns next year, probably to Vancouver, he hopes to make one of his first projects the translation into Spanish of *Beyond Poverty and Affluence*, a book co-authored by Dutch Christian economists Bob Goudzwaard and Harry de Lange.

"These books provide substance," he says. As a Catholic Christian he wants to stress that "there are more things that join us [Catholics and Protestants] than things that separate us."

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Family

The reluctant fisherwomen

Together Marty and I knew as much about fishing as the average Canadian knows about the Bible. Nevertheless, we agreed to take our 12-year-old son on a fishing holiday.

As each of our children reach the age of 12, we take that child on a short vacation. We took Angela to visit her Uncle Doug in New York City. With Alison we went camping in the Allegany Mountains.

Now Paul, who had won a tackle box at a Cadet campout and who had received a fishing pole from his sister for his 12th birthday, wanted to go fishing. It was a reasonable request.

So I picked up garage-sale fishing poles at a dollar each for Marty and myself. Leaving Paul's four sisters with their grandparents, we three headed

toward Balsam Lake, a lake rumored to be alive with bass and pickerel. On our way, we purchased fishing licences and plenty of groceries, just in case we didn't catch dinner.

'Ambience'

As we set up camp we acknowledged the definite fishing weather — it was raining. When the rain let up that first evening, we took our poles, tackle and styrofoam cup full of worms to a nearby dock.

Paul tied a brightly colored lure to his line. The salesperson in the sporting goods store had said this particular lure was good for shallow water.

For myself, I chose the smallest hook I could find, reasoning that such a tiny hook would be overlooked by the fish. I wasn't

too keen on dealing with live fish.

Handling live worms was difficult enough. The worms were fat, juicy and long — much too long for my little hook. And since I was too proud to ask Marty for help, I would have to pull one of these worms apart. The poor tortured thing stretched out between my fingers. I finally looked away and pinched hard. Then I squeezed that little bit of worm up around my hook and dropped my line into the water.

Hook of death

Within two minutes I felt a tug. Since my garage sale pole didn't include a reel, I pulled the line up hand-over-hand. I had hooked a little silvery fish no more than 10 centimetres in

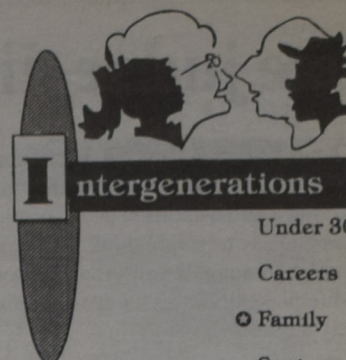
length. I tried to unhook it but that slippery little fish had swallowed my entire tiny hook.

Marty came to my rescue. By the time he wiggled my hook and line free, my poor fish had died. Marty looked at it and tossed it back in the water. "It's much too small," he said.

During the next 20 minutes I caught four more tiny fish. Each time I felt a nibble I would silently hope the fish would go away. It didn't. I kept several fish in a pail for awhile, but Marty insisted we throw my entire catch back. "A person could get arrested for keeping baby fish," he cautioned. Marty caught one fish even smaller than mine and Paul hooked a big one, but it got away.

We know more about fishing now. Fishing is a lot like evangelism; you need patience and you never know if you'll catch anything.

"Come follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." (Matthew



Intergenerations

Under 30

Careers

Family

Seniors



4:19).

Marian den Boer isn't planning any fishing trips in the near future. She lives with her husband and five children in Hamilton, Ont.

A quick way to end an era

When it comes to becoming empty-nesters, Audrey and Fred VanderVelde of Burlington, Ont. (bottom of picture) have a very simple formula: push your four children out of the nest within six months. The Vanderfeldes pay homage to the Dutch penchant for cleanliness: "*Opgeruimd staat netjes*" ("Clearing away looks neat").

It started on February 26 this year when son Douglas got married in Phillipsburg, Kansas, to Tina Van Kooten (second couple from r.). Daughter Anna followed suit (suitor?) when on June 26 she married Paul Vos in Waterdown, Ont. (second couple from l.). July 23 saw son Edward tie the knot with Pauline Kleinikkink in Alliston, Ont. (couple on far right). Finally, on August 20, daughter Lucinda spread her wings and exchanged vows with Douglas Sluys in Flamborough, Ont. They are the bride and groom in this picture.

We at CC wish the whole clan God's blessing on their marriages. And to help Audrey and Fred get over that empty feeling, we suggest a gift subscription to *Christian Courier* from them to their four children and spouses. A family that reads CC together stays together!

BW



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Editorial

The judge dispenses better justice than his boss

The decision by Judge George Adams of the Ontario Court's General Division to limit picketing against abortion at 18 locations is not as bad as one might think. Some of the limits are reasonable and show that some pro-life picketers at least have at times been overly aggressive.

The judge's order fell short of what Ontario's Attorney General, Marion Boyd, had sought, both as to the type of facilities covered and the size of the exclusion zones.

The judge granted the largest exclusion zone (500 feet) for picketing near the homes of doctors. That seems fair enough. Why should anyone picket the homes of doctors, anyway? Why should anyone make the doctor's wife, children and neighbors' lives miserable by parading up and down their street with signs?

The exclusion zone ordered around two Toronto clinics is 60 feet, and around another Toronto clinic, 30 feet. Creating such small

zones allows the woman going for an abortion the freedom to accept or not accept a pamphlet, to read a picket sign or not read it, says the judge in his 548-page statement. At the same time pro-life groups can still make their protest known to society.

The exclusion zone around the entrances to offices of six doctors who perform abortions at hospitals is 25 feet. Again, a reasonable zone, since other patients coming to see a doctor should not be hindered.

At the same time the judge did not allow any exclusion zones around hospitals performing abortions as requested by the Attorney General.

All in all, it seems that judge Adams has carefully balanced freedom of privacy with freedom of expression.

What the pro-choice media, politicians and groups do with this kind of judgment is a different matter. They are, of course, hailing the decision as a triumph for the right of women to have an abortion. They may well use it to portray pro-life groups as being too

aggressive and even abusive. Accounts of the bombing of the Morgentaler Clinic in Toronto and the murder of three doctors in the United States are constantly being hauled out to discredit the whole pro-life movement in Canada. (Attorney General Boyd made the reference at a news conference following the decision.) Clearly those were the acts of fanatics. The actions of the main pro-life groups have on the whole been peaceful and non-abusive.

What is very troublesome in all of this, however, is the fact that the government of Ontario through the office of its Attorney General sought to discredit and hinder the work of pro-life groups in Ontario. As Sabina McLuhan of Campaign Life in Toronto said so aptly at a news conference, "The NDP government, which is always so strong on the right to strike and picket, has seen fit to dump on us because we are politically incorrect."

Shame on the Ontario government for showing such partiality in the administration of justice!

BW

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Giving is an indescribable pleasure

As chair of our church council I am from time to time reminded of the importance of meeting our annual budget. I hear that many churches, including ours, are having a hard time doing that.

This is a difficult thing to address. Should you try to make members of the congregation feel guilty so that they will dig a little deeper into their pockets? Most agree that's not a good approach. Should elders bring up the subject at home visits? Should they even know what a particular family is giving?

We discussed this matter as a council and decided that our approach would be to ask people whether they enjoyed giving to the church and whether it was a spiritual act of worship for them.

More needs to be done, of course, such as informing the congregation of the various needs and encouraging them to be regular in their giving.

To demonstrate the importance of giving regularly, I rather like the story told to me by a Canadian Reformed pastor years ago. A man in his congregation was very angry with his church about something or other, to the point that he stayed away from church for five months. One day the pastor and an elder came to visit him. They talked the whole thing out

with him, apparently to the satisfaction of the man. Before they left, the man went to his cabinet and opened a drawer. From it he pulled all the envelopes he had not brought to church and handed them to the elder. Each one of them was filled with his weekly contribution. With tears in his eyes he said, "Here, take this. I couldn't stop giving."

Hilarious giving

In 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 the Apostle Paul gives an excellent perspective on giving generously. He makes several points:

1. If you sow generously, you will reap generously;
2. Don't give reluctantly or under compulsion because God loves a cheerful giver (actually it says "God loves a hilarious giver");
3. Your giving overflows into many expressions of thanks to God by other people who see that obedience accompanies your confession of faith;
4. The prayers of those you help will go out to you because God has blessed you with the indescribable gift of giving.

Paul is ecstatic about a church's opportunity to give. May we all be equally ecstatic about our opportunities to give generously.

BW

The personal touch

Thirty years ago I was teaching a Grade 3-4 class in an Ontario Christian school in which at least five children were experiencing severe reading and spelling difficulties. Lacking the resources of remediation teachers or special education experts, I worked with these children after school twice a week until 4:30. Since they lived in rural areas serviced by the school buses, the after-school tutoring meant that I also had to drive them home.

A rose by any other name...

I vividly recall some of those rides as the most harrowing of my driving experiences. In the winter months, the late afternoon snowstorms would whip around my Chevy II with its human cargo; in the spring thaw, we would crash through roadway ice to find ourselves almost floating in the waters below. We learned to pray and

sing and talk as a group at those times, and we became fervent believers in guardian angels.

Did the extra efforts remediate these children's learning difficulties? Although the phrase "learning styles" had not yet been coined, a variety of senses, intelligences and methods were used to enrich their classroom experiences. We drew pictures of words (visual imagery); we played train with sounds (auditory and kinesthetic); we sang songs with sounds and words (musical and auditory); we read stories to each other (narrative and verbal); the children edited and typed their stories (tactile, visual, analytical).

Their reading dysfluencies became less pronounced and they became more confident users of dictionaries for their spelling difficulties. After three months of after-school teaching, when the spring sun and farming chores demanded their in-

volvements, the tutoring sessions ended. They passed to the next grade; I moved on to other tasks.

Opening hearts

As I reflect on those students' improvements, I am increasingly convinced that their progress was not so much the consequence of my "intuitive learning styles" teaching, but more the result of having been together in those harrowing driving sessions.

The experience reminds me of a very moving address I heard from Dr. Gloria Stronks in which she recounted a breakthrough experience with a reading-disabled child. A school bus tragedy had brought the child to her room with the story of "blood on the snow." As Gloria struggled over and over to have the boy recognize the words of his written horror story, she broke down and cried.

It was at that point, when she

felt most despondent about the tragedy, and helpless in the face of his disability, that she heard him slowly begin to sound out his name, the words, the sentences. When they both realized that he had broken through his reading barriers, he slowly wiped her tears away.

Professionalism can be disabled

Maybe our students learn best when they encounter teachers at their most vulnerable moments. When students see their teachers as caring enough to cry, to pray, to be afraid, they become partners rather than victims in their educational struggles.

Today's teachers are much better trained to work with disabled children than those of us who learned to teach 30 years ago. Yet as a new school year dawns, I hope that this greater

EDUCATION

Alyce Oosterhuis



professionalism does not disable teachers from allowing themselves to be most vulnerable when it counts. Let's show our students the depth of our care.

Alyce Oosterhuis teaches education and psychology at The King's University College in Edmonton, Ont.

No donations for the debt 'sinkhole'

...continued from p.2

their real needs than is the government. If, in the future, there are people who fall between the cracks, it will be the churches and community groups who should try to minimize that.

Strahl says most Reform MPs donate 10 per cent of their salary either to debt reduction or to charities of their choice. Strahl chose not to give his 10 per cent to the "sinkhole" of debt reduction. What he likes about giving to charities is that these groups are accountable to their supporting community, and the money will be targeted where there is the most need.

In his role on the committee for Foreign Policy Review, Strahl recommends that the government increase the part of foreign aid that goes to non-government organizations, since they have a "proven track record of helping the poorest of the poor." In his opinion, that is a better use of our limited foreign aid dollars than sending them to a foreign government which might spend it on

projects to make themselves look good.

Use church buildings

When asked about the churches' role, Strahl says he would like to see them provide more day care, shelters for the homeless or abused, and other services that would otherwise be unavailable. Many churches have a multi-use facility and could be of great help in meeting these social needs. He hopes that the government will resist pressures to abolish or reduce the privileges and the charitable tax status that churches now enjoy.

When in the course of his work Strahl deals with people who fall between the cracks of the present system, he does his best to help or to find the help that is needed, he says. He does not have all the answers, he admits, but by his example he hopes to encourage Canadians to consider charitable organizations an important part of their monthly budget.

Letter

Columnist's concern was for children and women overload

I'm glad reader Anne Van Aragon Hutten agrees at least with the main point of my July 1 column "Farm wives with young children shouldn't be barn choring" when she writes (letter, Aug. 19) "...that the barn is probably no place for young children...."

Exactly. The barn is a dangerous playground for young children whose parents are busy with barn chores. From 1977 through 1993, work-related incidents in Ontario claimed the lives of 119 children under the age of 15. Approximately half of those victims were under age five. Many of the toddlers were drowned in cattle water troughs, kicked by cattle, run over by barn machinery and killed by falling objects such as bales of hay and straw, wood panels, doors, pieces of steel and other contraptions found in livestock barns.

But contrary to what Van Aragon Hutten thinks, I have no quarrel with farm women who barn chore, operate tractors or combines or any large farm implement if they have their kids in a safe place. In fact, I often have female employees operat-

ing my dairy farm when I'm away. But it makes me shudder when I see toddlers in a tractor or combine cab with their mom. Why? It's too dangerous.

Last week a woman called to say she is of slight build but always helped her 215-pound husband in the dairy barn. Even with housework and raising four young children she was lugging pails of grain and water to feed calves and heifers. She said over the years she spent so much money going to chiropractors that two years ago she told her husband she wasn't going to work in the barn anymore. He could well afford

stronger male help.

"Maynard, I had my hands full just running errands, housework and raising the kids. And do you know what? she said excitedly. "Since not working in the barn I haven't been to a chiropractor. That's two years ago. I'm in perfect shape."

"Your articles should run in all farm papers. Do you know that most farmers are more concerned about sick cows and calves than they are about their wives?" she laughed. "I made the right decision."

Maynard VanderGalen
Renfrew, Ont.

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Church, Marian Van Til, page editor

Canadian volunteers provide relief in Georgia

Tim Penning

ALBANY, Georgia — Wilma Schraa of Edmonton, kidded some of the residents of this southern U.S. town of 80,000 that she lived in an igloo.

Explaining who they were and creating a little laughter were just two things Schraa and her husband, Ray, did as part of three Canadian teams of Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) Disaster Response Services volunteers in Georgia in August. They were working as part of a larger force of volunteers from other agencies and denominations from all across the United States and Canada.

More than 12,000 homes were damaged or destroyed in parts of Georgia, Alabama, and the panhandle of Florida in early July when tropical storm "Alberto" dropped heavy rain in the area for several days. Residents of Albany were just as shocked by the flood of volunteers, especially those who came from far away.

"They really appreciate CRWRC," said John Verbarg,

of Chatham, Ont. "They see our green T-shirts and they ask about who we are. When we tell them we're from Canada they think we're from the north pole!"

But their main question, Verbarg adds, is when they will be able to get back into their homes. The Verbargs and many of the other volunteers worked with referrals from the American Red Cross to check on homes and report on the status of their affairs. They split into groups and drove as much as 130 to 140 miles a day through town. Nick Peet of Strathroy, Ont., quickly became expert on the streets of Albany. The Schraas played a special role, concentrating more on the residents than the homes.

A listening ear

"We visit maybe three homes a day all over the city, but we spend an hour or two at each home," Ray Schraa explained. "We just listen, not just to what they say but also how they react and feel."

The Schraas were equipped

with a list of local phone numbers of agencies and resources which flood victims could call for aid. Many victims are disoriented and unsure of what to do immediately after the flood. The elderly are especially traumatized by disaster. For this reason, the Schraas worked through the Southwest Georgia Council on Aging.

"Most people over 70 just need someone to talk to," Ray Schraa explained. "They really brighten up when we tell them they're not forgotten."

CRWRC volunteers each spent from two to three weeks in Georgia. Many have worked on many disaster sites before, and are ready to respond the next time disaster strikes.

"We still need more Canadian volunteers," says John Verbarg. He and his wife, Marie, count Georgia as their 16th trip with CRWRC since 1988. "We've been area managers for CRWRC in Classis Chatham since 1989, and there are now 45 on the list. So it's growing by word of mouth."



Nick Peet of Strathroy, Ont., (left) with Pete Kwantes of Grand Rapids, Mich., search for clues as to the address of a flood-damaged home in Albany, Georgia.

Haiti suffers under 'spiritual embargo'

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (EP) — With no apparent solution to the political problems in Haiti, Youth With A Mission (YWAM) director Tarry Snow says many churches and individuals have dropped their prayers and financial support of missionary work, creating a "spiritual embargo" on the island nation.

"Now is not the time to abandon Haiti," says Snow. "This is a crucial time for the country, when we need to press in like never before."

Together with most of his American team, Snow left Haiti shortly before the United States' tighter sanctions halted commercial flights out of the country in June. Despite rising anticipation of a U.S. invasion, Snow and his co-workers believe they will be able to return soon, and are pressing on with plans for a training school

for young Haitian Christians.

"The church is really coming alive in Haiti right now. There is a real sense of awakening, and yet many missionaries are leaving the country forever," says Snow. Missionaries are leaving the country, he says, not because of the economic difficulties on the island, but because of the lack of support for their work.

But the Haitian church continues to grow, despite the bleak conditions present there. "Haiti has led the way in what happens in this part of the hemisphere, and we believe she is meant to be a major missionary-sending force, a source of blessing," notes Snow.

"I would ask Christians not to give up on Haiti now. She is like a pregnant woman ready to give birth."

Christian broadcaster to set up cable system in Vietnam

Elisabeth Farrell

WASHINGTON (NNI)—In its continuing quest to improve economic and political relations with the West, the Vietnamese government is negotiating with the U.S.-based Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) to set up a wireless cable television system in Vietnam. However, a forthcoming report by the religious liberty advocacy group Puebla Institute asserts that severe religious repression still exists inside Vietnam, although government officials are now "using more hidden, less graphic methods" to blunt Western criticism.

CBN spokesperson Gene Kapp confirmed to NNI that his organization is negotiating with Vietnam to offer what he calls "uplifting, family-oriented programming." The proposed system would use microwave technology to beam dozens of channels to homes, first in Hanoi, and eventually else-

where in the country. United States Media Corporation, a subsidiary of the Virginia-based CBN, would operate the Vietnamese system, Kapp said.

Discussions for the rights to broadcast in Vietnam are still in the negotiation stage, Kapp emphasized, and no timetable has been established.

Subtle tactics

According to the *London Times*, CNN, BBC and Star TV programming are currently available at an increasing number of hotels in Vietnam. Individuals are allowed to buy satellite dishes, but have to apply for a special license.

Religious activities outside Vietnam's government-sanctioned churches have been strictly monitored and repressed, and it is unclear what concessions the conservative CBN would have to make for rights to broadcast programming, or if the government

would be able to censor material.

Kapp told NNI the system would not broadcast a Vietnamese translation of the "700 Club," CBN's flagship religious program, but rather would provide "uplifting, family-oriented programming that offers a message of hope."

Meanwhile, human rights groups remain concerned about the overall situation for religious freedom in Vietnam. Later this month, the Washington-based Puebla Institute will release a report outlining a new Vietnamese government campaign aimed at religious institutions instead of individual believers.

"[When you] direct repression against institutions, rather than individuals," said Institute President Nina Shea, "you don't have someone who's a symbol. [This is] a turn to tactics that will not draw an outcry or criticism from the West."

'If only he'd keep his mouth shut...'

"If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless" (James 1:26).

When Ernest Hemingway was in his early days as a writer, communicating didn't come easily for him. He was frustrated by the fact that words could tumble onto paper but meanings were harder to get at. One day an insight flashed through his mind. The key to good writing, he sensed, is simply writing stuff that is true!

But that was more difficult than he imagined. From the January morning in Paris when the inspiration blazed, he began every day to write what he termed one single, authentic, true and personal declarative sentence. By the end of May, five months later, he had managed to construct six straightforward, true sentences. Only then, says Carlos Baker, his biographer, was Hemingway on his way as a writer at last!

Maybe Hemingway struggled

with deeper issues of communication than most of us will have to face. Still, his recognition is worthy: talk is often cheap; words can just as easily mislead as they can instruct. As a pastor who listens to many people talk, I know how easily we can hide behind words; as a wordsmith of sorts myself, I know the danger of words that paint false pictures.

Some time ago, Dr. Wood Hill, a Toronto psychoanalyst, identified five personality types that are particularly prone to twisting and stretching the truth. There's the narcissist, said Dr. Hill, the person who lies in order to impress self and others with his or her magnificence of character or accomplishment. Her children always manage to do a little better than yours. His boss thinks he's the next CEO of the company. You know the kind. A little embellishing always helps the cause!

Second, there's the compulsive personality. Compulsive types are generally honest, but because they're often great sticklers for perfection, they

won't admit to finishing anything. Because of that, life is often a lengthy (and unnecessary) apology, disguising the good as something significantly less.

Then there's the hysteric. Their great need is to be noticed, affirmed. So they create a "truth" on the run that will bind others to them in sympathy or catharsis. A simple "Hi! How are you today?" will trigger symptoms of disease and disorder that even the person would never have believed possible only moments before.

Fourth are "borderline" personalities. Because they have difficulty tolerating frustration, such people tend to be impulsive and reckless. And when this leads to trouble they quickly shift the blame to others. I see this one every time there's a high-energy level of play among the children in our subdivision. Invariably someone gets hurt or something gets broken. And it doesn't take long till friends become accusers, and "truth" goes through a number of fascinating metamorphoses.

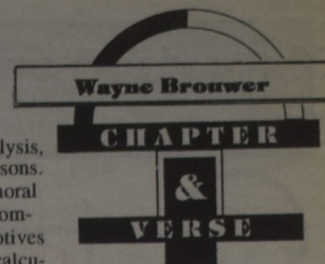
phoses.

Finally, in Dr. Hill's analysis, there are the anti-social persons. Such people's sense of moral values has been severely compromised, and selfish motives drive them to callous and calculated lies. M. Scott Peck calls such individuals "People of the Lie." Jesus had similar epithets for them in John's Gospel.

Catching the reverber

But the point is this: I see a little of myself in each of these types. I know how much I want to impress people. I agonize over doing some things right, deprecating myself in the process. At times, I just want people to care about me when I hurt. I don't like to be at fault, and sometimes I'll point fingers everywhere but at my own heart. And I can be a cruel and calculating liar; not often, but I know I have it in me!

No wonder James says that talk is cheap. Fine testimonies come a dime a dozen. The disease of falsehood is far more pervasive than cancer or AIDS. We all need the Doctor.



But sometimes we won't admit it until we shut up for a while and listen to ourselves.

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.

Drug-related murders slow evangelism of street children

BOGOTA, Colombia (EP) — World Cup soccer star Andres Escobar's violent murder on the streets of Medellin has given many potential missionaries to Colombia's street children one more reason to stay away.

According to one missionary recruiter, people are being frightened away from ministry to Colombia's thousands of abandoned children because of the many killings linked to the nation's narcotics industry.

Escobar was gunned down after he made a fatal error that

cost his team this year's World Cup. It is speculated that his death was linked to drug lords' anger over lost bets.

"There are very few Westerners working with street children in the country," said Danish missionary Flemming Kjaer, who helps raise money and manpower for groups working with homeless children and youth. "In some cases it is fear putting people off. There have been many cases of young Christians who wanted to come for help, who have not been al-

lowed to by their parents because of their concern for what might happen."

With his own family having received an anonymous bomb threat at their home, Kjaer said that he "understands their feelings," but stated, "I think that sometimes the Western Church has forgotten that as Christians we are already sacrificed to God's purposes. That can mean the risk of losing one's own life."

He added, "That is an enormous statement, and I am not

saying it should be the norm. I would say to people that if they believe God has spoken to them to come, they should."

Kjaer has lived with his family in the capital city of Bogota since 1989. As the director of the support-raising organization Pan de Vida (Bread of Life), he has been attacked and robbed. But, he says, the greatest dangers are faced not by workers, but the street children

themselves. Kjaer helps to manage Youth With A Mission's ministry to street children there.

Pan de Vida is an umbrella group for more than 20 Christian organizations working with street children in the country. It raises overseas funds for projects and helps organize training programs for new workers.

Need a chance to change your mind

BANGKOK, Thailand (EP) — A Roman Catholic bishop from Thailand has suggested that his church adopt the custom of "temporary commitment" to monastic life popular among Thai Buddhists. According to *Asia Focus*, published in Hong Kong, Bishop George Yod Phimphan of Udon Thani

will call on the Catholic church to consider allowing temporary religious vocation. His appeal will come at the October synod of Roman Catholic bishops in Rome. In Thai Buddhism, every male is expected to be temporarily ordained as a monk for some time in his life, usually for a period of three months.

According to Phimphan, this system of temporary commitment would give Roman Catholics a chance "to study and pray" to deepen their faith, and allow those considering a permanent commitment to experience religious life with no stigma if they change their mind.

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James R. Payton, Jr.

This is the first instalment of a three-part series of articles by three Redeemer professors on the subject of playfulness. "Some colleagues and I have noticed over the last few years a generally suspicious (if not hostile) attitude within the broader evangelical and Reformed communities toward laughter, playfulness and fantasy," writes James Payton. "Our intention is to invite others to appreciate some wonderful gifts which we too often neglect."

Can our laughter praise God? You would hardly get that impression from most of our worship services. Is laughter inappropriate in a setting of praise, or incompatible with the love of God? We Christians often seem uncomfortable with laughter. But maybe our lack of laughter indicates, not the holy awe we sometimes claim it does, but a failure to open up to God and revel in him.

Dare we speak of laughter and the love of God in the same breath? I think we should, for at least three reasons.

First of all, we should recognize that *laughter comes from God's hand*. The ability to laugh is something God gave to us as part of his good creation. It is not something he dumped on us after the Fall, as part of the

curse. Laughter can be misused, of course; but then, what can't? We know well that human sin has corrupted this area of God's good creation, but that doesn't mean that laughter itself is somehow suspect or ungodly. It is something God gave us, something with which we can glorify him. As his people, we are not free to condemn (in the guise of a supposed holiness) God's good gifts. That is not piety, but arrogance.

Delight in God

Laughter is a God-given way to respond to the absurd, to the surprising, to something that seems especially out of place. It is a way of celebrating what catches us delightfully off-guard. It is a playful, whole-souled response to what we

suddenly discover in this world that belongs to God. If we love God, we will delight in him and in what he has done. Laughter is both a reason and a way to do that. If, as Scripture tells us, God "richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment" (1 Tim. 6:17), then surely, as God's people, we must be open to laughter.

"But the Bible never presents Christ laughing!" True enough! But neither does it present him watching sports events, washing his clothes, adding spices to his food, combing his hair, buying groceries, speaking with his next-door neighbor or riding anything but a donkey. The Gospels don't try to tell us everything Christ ever did. They offer proclamations of the Savior, whose redemption encompasses God's whole cosmos, and who is now at work, "making all things new" (Rev. 21:5) — including laughter.

Laughter as protest

In the second place, *laughter can be a spur to spiritual growth*. As God's people we must take spirituality seriously; but neither ourselves nor our particular practices too seriously. When we do, we act as if we have "God in a box," and we need to be knocked down a peg or two.

One of the best ways for that to happen is to have someone hold up our failures and pompous silliness to exposure by "poking fun," not at Christianity or godliness, but at us and what we do. The laughter that erupts from this is not mockery of what is spiritual, but a protest against what is not.

If only we can then laugh at ourselves, we will be more open to change — and grow. Back in the 1500s, Erasmus knew this. In his writings he often held up contemporary Christian attitudes and practices to ridicule, and many people in his day were angry with him for it. But they mistook their attitudes and practices for the faith. Erasmus didn't mock God or the faith, he just exposed the folly of a lot that was passed off as Christian in his day. He got people laughing at themselves so that they would consider more carefully what God really calls us to in life and worship.

Once we learn to laugh at ourselves, we find it hard to take ourselves seriously, but easier to take what is really important seriously. Laughter, used this way, opens us up to grow in genuine holiness. In so doing, laughter serves the love of God.

Faith is absurd

Finally, *laughter can be used to celebrate God's truth*. We can not only laugh at ourselves, to cut ourselves down to size. We should also laugh *because of God*, to exalt his grace. Laughing in this manner is not the laughter of blasphemy; quite the opposite! In blasphemy, human beings mock God by claiming his prerogatives for themselves or by making little of him and his ways toward us. But laughter, as God's gift, can — and should — be used to praise him. As his people, we can — and should — use it to respond to and celebrate the greatness of his ways toward us.

In the ancient church, Tertul-

lian was one of the first significant theologians of the Latin-speaking West. He declared, *Credo, quia absurdum est*: "I believe, because it is absurd." The Christian faith is "beyond reason" (the original meaning of "absurd.") It is *absurd* because it is from God, not from us and what we might dream up.

Is the Christian faith still, for us, a glorious, wonderful, delightful absurdity, or have we turned it into some reasonable reasonableness? Do we celebrate the surprise of the Incarnation? Can we still laugh with delight at Christ's resurrection? Have we traded the childlike shriek of surprised joy and the peals of following laughter in church for a dulled "I've already heard that" response — in a spirit of supposed reverence indistinguishable from propriety at a funeral home?

What God has done for us in Christ is and must remain for us exciting, surprising, absurd. When it is, we can celebrate our delight in him and his grace with laughter as we sense anew how wonderful he is to us. Then stories which help us see afresh the wonder of the Incarnation, plays which lightly portray the shock of the resurrection, and jokes which delight in the loving care of God will be recognized as sacrifices of praise. And the laughter into which they issue will proclaim our love of God.

James R. Payton, Jr., is associate professor of history at Redeemer College in Ancaster, Ont.

A look in the CRC mirror

Wayne Brouwer

Wayne Brouwer acted as second clerk for the Christian Reformed Synod 1994. This position gave him a unique place from which to watch the deliberation of synodical delegates. In this article he reflects on the four traditions that were represented in the discussions on the "ordination of women."

I'm in a bit of a melancholy mood these days. We're going through Congregational Master Planning (CMP) in our congregation, and it is forcing us to take a hard look at ourselves as a congregation: who we are, what we think our ministry must and might be, and what kind of temperament we have by which we reflect the character of our relationship with God and others. Some things we see are quite exciting. Other leave us a little deflated. Mostly, it's a tough thing to hold up a mirror and see ourselves in lovingly critical reality.

Perhaps the most fascinating thing about this process is the growing camaraderie it is bringing to all of us who are willing to take a hard look at ourselves individually and corporately, and the delight we begin to have in the great variety of persons, gifts and personality types that create a Body of Christ larger

than our own limitations.

I thought of that earlier this summer as I sat at synod.

It was a fascinating thing to see this great denomination called the Christian Reformed Church come alive in a very human way as the delegates brought, for a while, a segment of the Body together in a small space. One of the things that became apparent, as discussions progressed and debates rumbled, is that there are different legacies represented among us, each bearing its particular approach to Reformed Christianity. On many things we see eye to

eye, and we join hands in common songs and testimonies. But now and again the accents of our speech betray us and we find ourselves viewing one another with suspicion. Why? Not so much because some of us are orthodox and others heretical; rather, it often has to do with the unique insight and approaches that have shaped us in slightly different expressions of our common heritage.

A warm spirituality

Take the influence of the *Afscheiding*, for instance. That secession from the state Reformed Church in the Netherlands took place in 1834. It was prompted by a wave of spiritual renewal that swept northern Europe. The Netherlands had just come through a great and golden era in which wealth and prosperity ruled, and culture was at an unprecedented level of decency. Formalized structures of government were solid and the church was closely allied with these governing powers. The Enlightenment had worked its magic, "modernizing" thinking in all the social disciplines toward a human-centred world. It was an age of formal propriety and one which saw the limitless powers of human ingenuity.

But science, technology and education couldn't fulfill the needs of the human spirit. And the *Afscheiding* was a pietistic backlash to all the formalism and humanism of the age. It demanded personal humility

and introspection. It desired a renewal of mystic devotion to a transcendent God. It looked suspiciously at the learning and culture that made humans more "decent" but less "spiritual." It took the razor of faith to all the trappings that surrounded modern Christianity, and attempted to get back to something simpler and more straightforward. And in its desire for holy living it clearly marked off the boundaries of the people of God over against the big, bad world.

A keen mind

Another stream in our heritage unfolded itself half a century later. When Abraham Kuyper came to prominence in the Netherlands, little had changed in the state Reformed Church. The *Afscheiding* congregations were living in splendid isolation while the larger expressions of cultured Christianity remained much as they were earlier. And Abraham Kuyper embraced the state forms of religion with open arms, until he experienced a transforming conversion to personal faith. Then he led a revival of Reformed Christianity that carried with it a new name: the *Doleantie*.

The *Doleantie* of 1886 was more cosmopolitan in its approach to Reformed Christianity than was the *Afscheiding*. Here it was philosophic comprehensiveness more than mysticism that shaped the manner in which Christianity would come to expression. Culture was not a bad thing, but rather an opportunity to expand the wide-ranging influence of Jesus Christ in the human arena. Reformed theology needed a return to orthodoxy, but it must speak to life in broader ways than personal pietism. The radical nature of redemption must enter every expression of human living and change it into an element of the eternal Kingdom of God.

Fraternal twins

Here's the interesting thing: the Christian Reformed Church

in North America had its origins in 1857. That's half-way between the *Afscheiding* and the *Doleantie*. And it makes for an intriguing reading of our denominational history. Most of the early development of the CRC originated from transplanted communities of the *Afscheiding*, with its particular outlook on faith and life. However, much of the later expansion of the CRC, particularly in Canada, evolved out of the immigration to North America of those who were deeply influenced by the *Doleantie*. And the differences of approach to Reformed Christianity between

Afscheiding were willing to join the *Doleantie* in a common church union. And the successive splintering of the denomination formed in the Netherlands in 1886 often found these perspectives on opposite sides of the issues.

A powerful will

So too in North America. And more recently, as the Christian Reformed Church emerges from its ethnic ghettos and finds itself working within the larger confluence of Christian denominations, two other shaping influences are noticeable. First, there is the Presbyterian



Wayne Brouwer acted as second clerk at Synod '94.

these two show up in remarkable ways.

For instance, Reformed Bible College is a wonderful expression of the Bible-centred mission piety of the *Afscheiding*. On the other hand, the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto breathes with the philosophic acumen of the *Doleantie*. Or again: Christian Reformed World Missions began as an 1834-influenced Board of Foreign missions, while the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee is an 1886-inspired attempt to add "deed" to "word" in Reformed witness. Once more: *Outlook* magazine, previously known as *Reformed Outlook* and earlier still as *Torch and Trumpet* (after Gideon's victorious routing of the Midianites in Judges 7) has always breathed the air of 1834, while its cultured counterpart, *Reformed Journal* (now fused with *Perspectives* and known by that name), saw itself expressing the larger dimensions of 1886.

These two streams of Reformed identity have not always co-existed easily. In fact, not all the congregations of the

approach to Reformed Christianity. John Knox studied under John Calvin in Geneva and then brought the Reformed outlook to Scotland. However, the Calvinism of the British Isles evolved in a slightly different way than it did on the Continent.

Presbyterianism was influenced by Scottish Realism (also known as "Common Sense" philosophy) which emphasized the ability of uneducated human reason to understand life and its meaning. While that may be debated in several directions, what happened was that Presbyterianism tended to emphasize (1) the "plain" reading of Scripture over against more intricate theological and philosophical interpretations, and (2) the structures of divinely engendered authority. Whereas Continental Reformed Christianity focused on God's covenantal relationship with humans, and the philosophic implications of that, British Presbyterianism focused more strongly on the imperial lines of

Continued on page 10...

Film review

'Heaven' makes you feel better

Marian Van Til

Corinna, Corinna

Rated PG

Stars Whoopi Goldberg, Ray Liotta, Tina Majorino
Written and directed by Jessie Nelson

Corinna, Corinna raises two serious issues, death and racism, but still manages to be upbeat. That's partly because of Whoopi Goldberg's comic presence, but in good part because it's afraid to confront those issues. "Upbeat" here involves denial.

We're off to a promising start. Opening scene: floor-level shots of various pairs of legs and feet in Manny Singer's living room, right after the funeral of his wife. The Legs and Feet talk about how wonderful the wife was, how great she looked in the casket — the usual stuff at secular funerals. The camera's point of view is eight-year-old Molly's

point of view, we find. Bewildered at her mother's death and the crush of relatives, she is hiding under the dining room table, refusing to speak.

How, we wonder, will writer/director Jessie Nelson, through Manny, deal with the silent young daughter? How will Manny handle his own grief? How will he explain death to his child — and to himself?

Love is blind

Manny's first act is to hire a housekeeper/nanny. After the usual interviews with all sorts of humorously unsuitable characters, Whoopi Goldberg enters as the college-educated, slightly wacky Corinna. Predictably, Molly blossoms under her care and comes to love the nanny. Eventually, so does her father. There are touching moments, particularly in Molly's obliviousness to the social implications of her being white and Corinna being black. Love, to children, can be truly, and happily, blind. (The story concept comes from the director's life. At age three Nelson's mother died and she wanted her

father to marry their elderly black maid.) The race relations theme is complicated by the fact that the story takes place circa 1960. While even today such a relationship is not easy, 35 years ago neither society nor most families (on either side) would countenance such a thing. Manny's mother says: "A fish and a bird can fall in love, but where will they live?" The film avoids the problem by ending just as Manny and Corinna have realized they truly love each other, and when they will have to start realistically dealing with how society will treat them.

Faith an opiate

A more serious avoidance relates to the death theme. It's virtually impossible for us human beings to confront death without examining our beliefs about mortality and immortality (being created as we were). Corinna is a Christian, the film implies. We see her singing in her church choir and we hear her tell Molly that her mother is in heaven, "probably looking down and smiling at you right

now." Manny is not amused. He's an atheist, he says, and so was his wife; so he understandably doesn't want Corinna foisting her beliefs on his child.

Corinna's angels and heaven, however, are only so much popular drivel; they bear no resemblance to biblical angels or to a truly Christian view of immortality (and of course, there are no requirements for getting into this heaven).

When Manny tells his daughter that heaven is something people have made up to make themselves feel better, Molly counters, "What's wrong with that?" Writer/director Nelson seems to be saying: yes, religion is the opiate of the people, but is that so bad?

Near the end, when Manny thinks he has lost Corinna too, he retreats from his atheism and begins to talk to God, though he can't bring himself to call God by name.

Will his new attitude have a lasting effect on his life? Maybe, but not likely. A nebulous, trauma-induced belief held to make you feel better



isn't going to be of much use once you've climbed out of your foxhole; it just can't stand up to reality. And that's the problem with this film, despite its attempts at emotional honesty. There's some good acting here, some nice camera work, several poignant moments, and periodic humor. But one can't escape the thought that this movie is like the "faith" it espouses: it makes you feel good for an hour or two, but in the end signifies virtually nothing.

A look in the CRC mirror shows our diversity

...continued from p. 9

authority in the Kingdom of God. The difference of approach becomes evident in a parallel reading of the *Heidelberg Catechism* (Reformed) and the *Westminster Catechism* (Presbyterian).

The close relationship between the CRC and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church shows our kinship. But the tensions in that relationship show our slight differences of thought and intuition. However, through the education of many CRC ministers at Westminster seminaries, and other intermingling, the historic Presbyterian mind is also part of our identity today.

Practical Christianity

Second, there is the larger and very pervasive influence of American evangelical fundamentalism. In years past evangelicalism was identified as something different from

fundamentalism. Evangelicalism symbolized the outward-reaching of various Christian denominations in witness and service, whereas fundamentalism spoke of a rigorous orthodoxy of theology. Sometimes they went together, sometimes not. However, in recent decades, with the great revival of "conservative" Christianity in North America, these two terms have largely come together.

American evangelical fundamentalism tends to be pragmatic in its cultural outlook, authoritarian in its theological perspectives and "proof-texting" in its method of argument. And each of these dimensions has close affinity with elements of our historic Reformed traditions. Still, when taken together as a package, often forcibly thrust upon us by the burgeoning dictates of church life in North America, with its publish-

ing, its schools, and its sociopolitical movements like "Focus on the Family," "Promise Keepers," and the like, it has become another distinct stream of thought in our Reformed family.

Family reunion

Now let's get back to the floor of synod and watch the debates unfold. Sometimes one color of our heritage displays itself, sometimes another. Two things are evident as the discussions heat up. First, we can easily talk past each other as if we're speaking different languages. It's important for all of us to remember that the dialects we use are kindred tongues and not the alien vernaculars of warring parties. The terms "liberal" and "conservative" are not always descriptive when two streams of orthodox Reformed interpretations choose different ways of outlin-

ing issues and their resolution. But the nuances of the varying traditions often speak in dialects that need a bit of interpretation. We should take the time to hear one another out before quickly marking ourselves off from one another because of our particular "Shibboleths" of speech.

Second, we ought to remember that we need each other. *Afscheiding* piety, left unchecked or unbroadened, can devolve into individualistic pietism that never gets around to the larger dimensions of corporate witness in our complex world. *Doleantie* social transformation can wear itself out in causes without heart. Presbyterian rationalism can too narrowly define Reformed Christianity in absolutes of theological authority. American evangelical fundamentalism can win debates while missing the point, or place undue emphasis on a con-

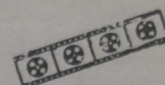
servative moral-majority subculture.

Each root of our present Reformed mix brings with it great strengths and necessary correctives to the failings or lack found in the others. However, like Paul said in his first letter to the Corinthians, we are part of Christ's body, and we need each other as he expresses his larger purposes for the church through us.

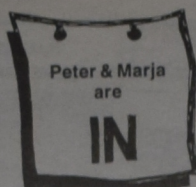
A glance in the mirror tells us we're still there. Hours in front of the mirror may be narcissistic. But a few moments of thoughtful reflection may remind us of the rich diversity that allows us to be together much more than we can be separated and divided from one another. For the sake of Christ.

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church, London, Ont.

Media / Arts



Advice



What's wrong with pornographic foreplay?

Dear P & M:

I need your wise counsel. Recently we had a discussion among Christian friends regarding movies. Most were of the opinion that there is nothing wrong for married couples to watch movies that show a lot of skin, usually the woman's, and, of course, a lot more, if you know what I mean. I said, as Christians we have no business watching that stuff. Even though none of them would want their daughters playing such roles they disagreed with me. Their argument was that watching such shows enhanced the time they spent together. What is your opinion?

Dear Concerned About Porn:

We want to begin by commending you and your friends for discussing an area of our lives that we tend to keep secret. Dialogue with fellow Christians leads to better decision-making in our personal lives. Your willingness to take a minority position is also commendable. It takes courage to go against the flow.

The opinion held by your friends reveals the pervasive reach of pornography. X-rated material has become very acceptable in our society and many couples, including Christians, use it as foreplay.

There is no doubt that pornography is very stimulating. It does enhance and sustain sexual arousal for many people. Why else would it sell so well? But we've never bought the argument that if it feels good it must be all right. Neither do we buy the argument that anything goes as long as it involves two consenting adults.

Every film comes with a world-and-life view. X-rated movies are unacceptable because they promote the idea that sex without commitment is fine and adulterous sex makes it more exciting.

In a recent *Banner* article, Dr. Tom Zeyl, one of our panelists, wrote the following: "What makes both hard- and soft-core pornographic books, magazines, pictures and movies wrong is that they invite the viewer to commit mental adultery. They stimulate thoughts that unite the viewer in some way with those in the photographs, on the film, or in the story. The viewer becomes a participant, active or passive, in the scenario portrayed. This mental connection directly violates God's command against adultery. And it ignores Solomon's wise advice in Proverbs 6:25-26, 32: 'Do not lust in your heart after her beauty or let her captivate you with her eyes, for the prostitute reduces you to a loaf of bread, and the adulteress preys upon your very life ... (and) a man who commits adultery lacks judgment; whosoever does so

destroys himself" (*The Banner*, March 14 1994, p. 21).

Pornographic material can be addictive. Perhaps the couples who participated in your discussion would also have to admit that, to varying degrees, they have become dependent on this material to be sexually aroused together. If they're really honest with themselves, they may also have to acknowledge that they need more and more stimulation (i.e. more and more explicit material) to reach the same high. This is what Paul addresses in Ephesians 2:19: "Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more."

We don't actually have a problem with nudity or the portrayal of sexual activity. We strongly believe that sex education is important for singles and marrieds. And we enjoy a romantic scene in a novel or film just as much as the next person. Explicit doesn't make it wrong; exploitive does! So our real problem with x-rated material is its value system and its degrading and addictive effect on the actors and the audience.

Isn't it strange, though, how we humans can compartmentalize ourselves. Each couple in your living room agreed with you that they would be extremely upset if one of their daughters or sons were involved in the making of pornography. Each couple probably also agreed, deep in their hearts, that the lifestyle promoted by pornography is anti-Christian. And yet there is something in all of us that shuts off our warning systems and silences our Christian conscience.

Your friends should continue to take an intentional approach to sexuality. We encourage them to plan a romantic and sexually stimulating evening. But they should build it on an evening of sharing and intimacy. And if they really want to incorporate some explicit material about sex, let them search for instructional material by qualified health professionals that promotes marital fidelity and enhances the expression of our God-given desires within the confines of a lasting commitment.

Write to: P & M
c/o *Christian Courier*
4-261 Martindale Road
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Lidkea, Tom Zeyl, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.

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Classified Rates	Births	Anniversaries	Anniversaries	Anniversaries
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	VANGEST: Gord and Anita praise and thank God for the birth of ARI JOHAN A brother for Jacob. Born in McMaster University Hospital on Aug. 22, 1994. Another grandson for John and Hilda Tamming of Orangeville, Ont., and Art and John VanGeest of Grimsby, Ont.	Ed and Willie Grootenboer, Sept. 18, 1964. Happy 30th Mom and Dad (Grandma and Grandpa)!		
	Marriages POOL-JOUSTRA: Linda and Murray, Jennifer, Danielle and Jonathan are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their Dad FRANK POOL to GRACE JOUSTRA The ceremony will take place, D.V., on Sept. 24, 1994, at 2:30 p.m., at the Bethel Chr. Ref. Church, London, Ont., with pastor Gerrit Haagsma officiating. Future address: 140-230 Clarke Road, London, ON N5W 5P8	Broek op Langedijk Carlisle 1949 September 22 1994 To celebrate 45 years of many blessings and love in our family, we wish to announce the wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents PAUL and MAARTJE GROEN (nee VISSER) You have shown us how to live before God and man. May the Lord bless you as you have been a blessing to us. Elly Groen — Hamilton John & Leanne Groen — Richmond Hill Jane & Jim Vanderzwaag — Dundas Mike & Marina Groen — Waterdown Maryann & John Voortman — Chino, Calif. Paul & Teresa Groen — Carlisle Bill & Lynn Groen — Caledonia and 21 grandchildren. Open house to be held at Bethel Chr. Ref. Church, Waterdown, Ont., on Sept. 24, 1994, from 2-4 p.m. Best wishes only. Address: 124 Carlisle Road, R.R. 1, Freelon, ON L0R 1K0	1954 Clinton 1994 "Then you will know which way to go" (Joshua 3:4a). It is with joy and thankfulness to God, we wish to announce the 40th anniversary of our parents and grandparents GARY and CORNELIA HAAK (nee GREIDANUS) With our love: Clarence & Diane Haak Jessica, Lyndsey, Jeremy John & Janet Haak Daniel, Steven, Amanda Marg & Jack Kroes Bradley, Shelley, Lorraine Gary & Yolanda Haak Caleb Wilma & Raymond Drost Stacie Albert Benita In celebration of this happy occasion, an open house will be held on Saturday, Sept. 24, 1994, from 2-4 p.m., at the Vanastra Community Church, Vanastra, Ont. Best wishes only please! Home address: R.R. #4, Clinton, ON N0M 1L0	
	Anniversaries Clinton Hensall 1954 September 17 1994 "Blessed is he whose help is in the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God" (Ps. 146:5). With gratitude and praise to God, we joyfully celebrate the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents GERALD and JANNY HEYINK (nee VANLOCHEM) with an open house on Saturday, Sept. 17, 1994, at the Exeter Legion Hall, from 2-4 p.m. We pray that the Lord will grant them many more blessed years together. Congratulations and love from: William (deceased) Allan & Sylvia Heyink Scott Raymond Heyink Address: R.R. #2, Hensall, ON N0M 1X0	Church News Christian Reformed Church Calls accepted: — as a team pastor to Zion, Oshawa, Ont., Rev. Arlan Koppenderayer, on leave from West Leonard CRC, Grand Rapids, Mich. Address change: — Rev. Ramkes and Mrs. Janette Kooistra, 25 Westmount Road N., #1505, Waterloo, ON N2L 5G7; (519) 885-6105	Teachers BARRIE, Ont.: Timothy Chr. School is accepting applications for a possible opening in the Grade 6/7 split classroom. Computer knowledge would be an asset. Please submit resumes to: Jane Tulloch, Principal Timothy Chr. School 49 Ferris Lane Barrie, ON L4M 2Y1 Phone: (705) 726-6621	September 5, 1959 With praise and thankfulness to our Lord we joyfully announce the 35th wedding anniversary of our dad and mom, opa and oma ANDY and HENNY STRIKWERDA (nee KIEFFE) We thank Him that you have taught us in His ways. May the Lord continue to bless you as you have been a blessing to us in so many ways. With love from: Ted & Debbie Strikwerda Don & Cyndie Andringa Andreahenry, Darrin, Benjamin, Esther Dory Strikwerda Colin & Brenda Cragg Bethany John & Danielle Strikwerda Home address: 113 Concession St. East, Bowmanville, ON L1C 4K6 With thankfulness to God, on Sept. 24, 1994, we celebrate the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents HENK and JOKE VAN OLST (nee KASSIES) Congratulations Mom and Dad. We love you. Henry & Mary Van Olst Jeffrey, Karen, Michelle, Lisa Richard & Irene van Olst Laurie, Eric, Heather, Elizabeth Dale & Darlene Van Stempvoort Krista, Jonathan, Emily Andrew & Dawn Van Olst Andrew Jr., Suzanne, Alyssa Roland & Maureen van Olst Open house will be held on Saturday, Sept. 24, 1994, from 1:30-3:30 p.m. at the Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church of Woodbridge (4561 Langstaff Rd., Woodbridge, Ont.).
Birthdays  VANDERVEEN: We rejoice with our father, grandfather, and great-grandfather CORNELIUS K. VANDERVEEN on the occasion of his 90th birthday on Sept. 13, 1994. We thank the Lord for giving Heit so many years with Mem. May the Lord bless you both and keep you in His arms. Address: Trinity Towers, 7900 McLaughlin Rd., Brampton, ON L6V 3N2, (905) 451-4653.				

Classifieds

Obituaries	Obituaries
<p>"Therefore my beloved brothers, stand firm and immovable, and work for the Lord always, work without limit, since you know that in the Lord your labor cannot be lost" (1 Cor. 15:58).</p> <p>The Lord in His infinite wisdom took into His eternal glory our dear brother, brother-in-law and uncle</p> <p>SIEDS VANDER MEER</p> <p>"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: And I will dwell in the House of the Lord forever" (Ps. 23:6).</p> <p>Lovingly remembered by us all:</p> <p>Hottie & Wiebe Vander Gaast — Bowmanville, Ont.</p> <p>Don & Ann Vander Meer — Oshawa, Ont.</p> <p>Auke & Corry Vander Meer — Blackstock, Ont.</p> <p>Sjerp & Edna Vander Meer — Hickson, Ont.</p> <p>Rose & Peter Feddema — Bowmanville, Ont.</p> <p>Adrian & Wilma Vander Meer — Lethbridge, Alta.</p> <p>Verna & Ivan Joosse — Newmarket, Ont.</p> <p>nieces and nephews.</p>	<p>"Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" (Matt. 25:21).</p> <p>The Lord called to his eternal home</p> <p>JOHN DEN BOER</p> <p>on Aug. 27, 1994, in his 75th year, after a brief illness.</p> <p>Beloved husband of Wilma den Boer (nee Knibbe).</p> <p>Loving father and grandfather of: Arianne — Oshawa</p> <p>Reta & Archie Bamhoom — Papua New Guinea</p> <p>Jonathan, David, Becky, Daniel</p> <p>Marien den Boer — New York City</p> <p>Dave & Marian den Boer — Hamilton</p> <p>Karen, Suzanne, John, Linda, Rachel</p> <p>Jane & John Batterink — Port Perry</p> <p>Laura, Celine & Miranda</p> <p>Also survived by family in Ontario, Michigan and the Netherlands.</p> <p>He died of cancer peacefully at home in the presence of his family.</p> <p>"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord" (Rev. 14:13).</p> <p>The funeral took place on Aug. 31, 1994, at the Hope Chr. Ref. Church in Port Perry, Ont., Rev. J. Geuzebroek, Rev. C. Geelyne and Rev. K. Van Schelven officiating.</p> <p>Correspondence address: 11255 Old Simcoe Road, Port Perry, ON L9L 1B3</p>
<p>On Monday, Aug. 22, 1994, God suddenly called home our beloved brother-in-law</p> <p>REV. SIEDS VANDER MEER</p> <p>"...know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain" (1 Cor. 15:58b).</p> <p>Loving husband of our sister/sister-in-law Evelyn Vander Meer (nee Strikwerda).</p> <p>Sadly missed by:</p> <p>Andy & Henny Strikwerda — Bowmanville, Ont.</p> <p>Jean & Nick VanderKwaak — Grand Rapids, Mich.</p> <p>Richard & Sandra Strikwerda — Barrie, Ont.</p> <p>Elizabeth & Tom Sikma — Norwich, Ont.</p> <p>Hans & Ida Strikwerda — Woodstock, Ont.</p> <p>Philip & Bonnie Strikwerda — Lethbridge, Alta.</p> <p>Fred & Edel Strikwerda — Langley, B.C.</p> <p>Correspondence address: Evelyn Vander Meer, 360 Churchill Dr., Exeter, ON N0M 1S1</p>	<p>1917 - 1994</p> <p>"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Ps. 23:1,6).</p> <p>After a long and courageous struggle against cancer, through which his faith, hope, and love of the Lord was evident and an example for all</p> <p>WILLEM J. WYBENGA</p> <p>was called home by his heavenly Father on Sunday, Aug. 14, 1994.</p> <p>He will be missed and lovingly remembered by his wife, Lena, and his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren:</p> <p>Joe & Gwen Wybenga</p> <p>Warren & Carrie (Scott, Dale)</p> <p>Mary & John Hosmar</p> <p>Jim (and Marsha), Elaine & Richard (Brittany), Philip (and Carla)</p> <p>Bill & Rita Wybenga</p> <p>Nicole & Michael, Leanne (and Paul), Michael</p> <p>Dick & Mary Lou Wybenga</p> <p>Andy, Tanya</p> <p>He will also be missed by brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, and his many friends and neighbors for whom he always stood ready.</p> <p>Correspondence address: 300-100 Glen Hill Dr. S., Whitby, ON L1N 8R4</p>
<p>1905 - 1994</p> <p>On Thursday, July 28, 1994, the Lord took home our dear mother, grandmother and great-grandmother</p> <p>ANNIE SCHEEPSTRA</p> <p>She will be sadly missed by:</p> <p>Clarence & Ellen — Orillia</p> <p>John & Gerdie — Colborne</p> <p>Stephen & Lorraine — Georgetown</p> <p>14 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.</p>	

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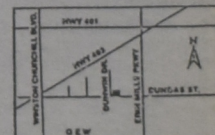
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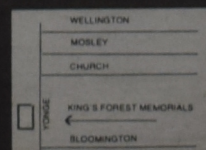
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Comment

The air and birds say summer's over

Primed, pumped and prepared by an army of aides, Parizeau and Johnson conducted one of those dull debates that really made you miss baseball on TV. Most commentators declared the debate a draw. Vancouver's Fraser Institute estimates that Quebec's share in the federal debt amounts to \$20,888 for every Quebecer.

★ ★ ★

Reformers have the tendency to put their feet between their molars. The Reform Association of Ontario wants to break away from the main Reform Party and has gone to court to try to keep the same name. Art Hanger, Reform MP for Calgary North-east, accused immigration officials of putting out the red carpet for homosexuals.

★ ★ ★

Revenue Minister David Anderson is rumored to have spent about \$30,000 on profile strengthening at the Commonwealth Games, a matter very sensitive to public opinion. The minister had his children meet the Queen at the Games, a privilege which he could have better given to others, disabled youngsters for instance. Minister Anderson, remember, wanted to sue the government for being released from some gravy-train appointment by the Tories. It seems that Mr. Anderson is as popular out West as a fox in a henhouse.

★ ★ ★

Guess who will wave the Gold red ensign in the House of Commons? Audrey McLaughlin? Guess again! It is Bloc Leader Lucien Bouchard, who wooed the Canadian Auto Workers with promises of support for amendments to the labor code which would include anti-scab legislation. The CAW proletariat applauded Bouchard like he was proposing six-month paid vacations. Audrey, where were you? Must Lucien carry the cause of the red solidarity fellowship? Of course, the NDP was busy navel-gazing in the nation's capital at a party congress. The party is about \$1.7 million in

the red (no pun intended). The big question: how to revive the waning socialist cause. Certainly not by letting Bouchard steal your thunder, comrades.

★ ★ ★

P.E.I. legislation which taxes cottages of non-island dwellers at a higher rate than those of residents has been upheld by the Supreme Court of Canada. P.E.I. officials also confiscated 800 unlicensed lobster traps set by Micmac Indians. "At least they can't say we're lazy," commented one native whose sense of humor was obviously in good repair.

★ ★ ★

Mr. Rene Bogaart, who operates a restaurant in the Netherlands, now offers a separate menu for the dogs of his clients. Little dogs get to choose between turkey or veal, while the more substantial canines get a choice between liver, beef or chicken. Mr. Bogaart's establishment has picked up considerable business since expanding the menu.

★ ★ ★

Israel has given Palestinian authorities in areas of the West Bank and the Gaza strip power in health, education, social welfare and tourism.

★ ★ ★

The United Nations organized a population conference in Cairo. The conference, which dealt with limiting world population, started on September 5. Fundamentalists Muslims and the Vatican, both in favor of uncontrolled popula-

World news

Carl D. Tuyl

tion increases, denounced the conference, and Egyptian fanatics also threatened delegates.

★ ★ ★

A Dutch sea captain was sentenced to three years in prison in Greece for throwing two Rwandan stowaways overboard near an island. The captain may also pay \$6,900 in lieu of the prison sentence. They must be hard up for cash there.

★ ★ ★

President Clinton scored big when his \$30 billion crime bill was finally approved by the Senate. Creaking joints could be heard all over the planet as a result of the arm-twisting that went on in the White House.

★ ★ ★

Before I get wrapped up in all this serious business, let me tell you what the *New York Times* discovered. Following a Supreme Court decision to return the power to define pornography to local communities, the town of Clarkston in Rockland County, New York, established a nine-member committee to screen movies, nightclub acts and printed matter. Mr. Harry Snyder, a 60-year-old retired businessperson, was appointed to the committee. Mr. Snyder is blind.

★ ★ ★

In Mexico, where a large number of billionaires live among a population of whom almost half are at poverty level, the ruling party held on to

power. No wonder, when at a fundraising dinner 30 businesspeople were asked to contribute \$25 million U.S. each to the party of President Salinas. With that kind of money, Jack the Ripper could defeat Mother Theresa. A victory by the opposition there seemed as unlikely as peaceful cohabitation between Hutus and Tutsis.

★ ★ ★

In spite of all this talk about the equinox (the sun meeting the celestial equator on September 21) or all that other astronomical stuff, I declare this summer to be over. How do I know? I can smell it in the air; and to top it off, the birds are swarming. There!

Carl Tuyl is chaplaincy co-ordinator in Canada for the Christian Reformed Church and is a member of the Ontario Multifaith Council on Spiritual and Religious Care.

bytes



Teacher Wanted

LONDON, Ont.: London Parental Chr. School requires an intermediate level teacher for a 60% position. Interested applicants are requested to contact the principal, Mr. Herb Goodhoofd, as soon as possible at (519) 455-0360 or (519) 434-7284.



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During September we are
scheduling issues for
September 2, 9 23 and 30.
(See box on page 3.)

Christian Courier will not publish on
September 16, 1994

News

Textbook offers choices through short stories

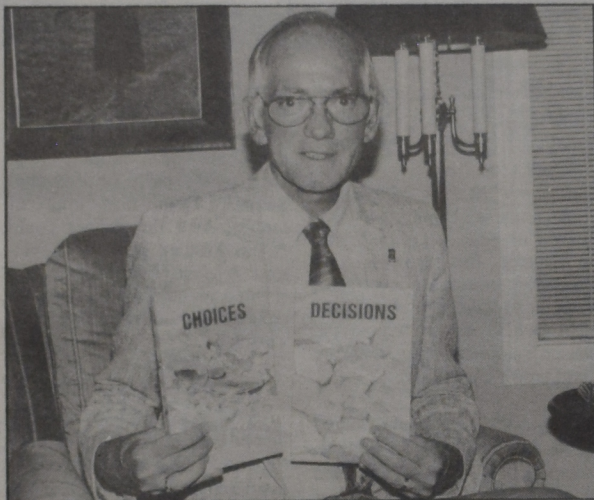
Bert Witvoet

ANCASTER, Ont. — "Proud, grateful, happy" — all these adjectives apply when describing how curriculum co-ordinator Jim Vreugdenhil feels about the first two short story anthologies the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools has ever published.

Entitled *Decisions* and *Choices*, both textbooks are meant for grades 7 and 8. They have identical introductory pages, but offer their own selection of short stories (28 in *Decisions* and 29 in *Choices*).

From the titles and the introductions it is clear that the OACS wants to stress religious choice as the overriding theme for all work done in the study of short stories. The books quote the famous covenant renewal words of Moses in Deuteronomy 30: 15-20: "See I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction.... Now choose life."

To enable students to work with the theme of choices and



Vreugdenhil can't decide which to choose.

decisions, the editors of the anthologies have included writings from Christian authors (you will find names like Christine van Belle, Sonja Vander-Veen Feddema, James Schaap and Sigmund Brouwer) as well as works by secular authors.

Combining stories with different visions is in keeping with the anthologies' message addressed to students that they "live in a complex world with many voices and messages bombarding you at every turn." Students are encouraged to test

the choices made by the various characters.

The first edition of 2,000 copies will soon be sold out, Vreugdenhil believes, as orders are coming in from across Canada and even from the U.S. He thinks the board of the Alliance was a little too cautious in limiting the first edition to 2,000, although he can appreciate the board's concern that the cost be covered. Fifty per cent of the cost was covered by a grant from the Canadian Christian Education Foundation in Burlington, Ont. A second edition is already being considered.

Vreugdenhil expects that many more Christian schools will purchase these anthologies. But he also believes that private individuals might like to own a copy of what he describes as "exciting stories to read for enjoyment and contemplation." The price per copy is \$9.00 for members schools and \$13.50 for others (shipping charge not included).

News Digest

Study explodes myths about immigrants

OTTAWA (Canadian Scene) — A recent study by Statistics Canada and Prentice Hall reveals that Canada's immigrant population has remained stable over four decades, that most immigrants have jobs, and that many are well-educated.

In 1951, immigrants made up 15 per cent of the population; in 40 years that figure rose only one per cent, for a total of 4.3 million immigrants in 1991.

In 1991, 86.1 per cent of immigrants aged 25 to 44 were working, only .8 per cent lower than for people Canadian-born. But in 1991 there were more immigrants with a university degree (14 per cent) than Canadian-born people with such a degree (11 per cent).

'Body glue' may replace stitches, staples

MARIETTA, Georgia — Renato Saltz of the Medical College of Georgia says having a spray bottle of glue in the operating room will "save time and money and give the patient a better result" — and soon. In fact, vials of freeze dried "body glue" are already available in Europe. Glue may be better than sutures because it readily stops bleeding, forms a tight surface, causes less scarring and induces quicker healing.

An Austrian doctor first made the glue in 1974 from blood proteins and an adhesive. Once scientists are sure that the glue is consistently free of blood-borne viruses, it will likely replace sutures or staples in many operations, they say.

Pastor does the Lord's work in Galilee

Carl D. Tuyl

The word "Galilee" conjures up pictures of our Lord's baptism and ministry. Mark reports how "...they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons... and he healed many" (Mark 1:32-33).

Now, 19 centuries later Rev. Suhail Ramadan is continuing

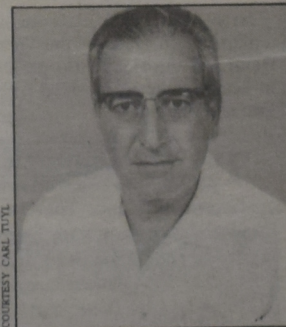
that ministry. Suhail Ramadan came to the Christian faith at the age of 13. Much later, his theological education included three years of study in Switzerland. He then returned to his native Galilee in 1971 to start the difficult task of church planting in the village of Turan, eight miles north of Nazareth. That

was Turan's first evangelical witness. The Lord has blessed Ramadan's persistent work and there is now a small Christian congregation in that village populated mostly by Muslims.

Twelve years ago the congregation commissioned Rev. Ramadan to work also as a prison chaplain. He now regularly visits eight prisons. Prison visits are not like other pastoral visits. The visitor must be cleared by the authorities, with all the red tape that accompanies that process. While in the institution the visitor must adhere to strict security regulations. For entering, visiting and exiting the visitor is totally dependent on the co-operation of staff, who are often very busy people. Ramadan also travels long distances to visit his imprisoned parishioners: some trips take six hours.

Tiny but crucial church

As it is here in Canada and probably in correctional institutions all over the world, there is a church behind the bars. In the prisons Ramadan visits, there are not more than 10 Christians. Their incarceration is usually



COURTESY CARL TUYL

Rev. Suhail Ramadan.

for drug-related crimes. The demon of drug addiction, writes Ramadan, "is attacking all kinds of people from all ages and from all denominations." Rehabilitation within the institution is rare, and the country has no Christian rehabilitation centres. Ramadan's ministry expresses a Christian approach to the search for healing.

Rev. Ramadan would like to extend his visitation to political prisoners, but he has not yet received permission to do so.

But his ministry continues in spite of many difficulties.

Says Rev. Ramadan: "Israel is a special country, it has been

You can help the man from Galilee

Rev. Ramadan is quite isolated and would like to have contact with other prison chaplains. But his small congregation lacks the funds to send him to the 1995 International Conference of Prison Chaplains in Hull, Quebec, where he could find encouragement from others (Rev. Henry Smidstra, a Christian Reformed prison chaplain at the Burnaby, B.C., Correctional Institute for Women will be present at the conference).

So the Canadian Chaplain Committee has decided to seek sponsors who would enable Rev. Ramadan to attend that gathering of chaplains. A special fund has been formed to meet travel and attendance expenses, which will be about \$3,500. Several dioceses have already generously contributed to the fund.

Anyone wishing to help in this effort may send contributions to: Canadian Chaplain Committee, 342 Arrowhead Pl., Kingston, ON K7M 3L3.

so in the eyes of God since the beginning. God in his majesty had a special plan for this country, and we who live in Israel have to work hard in all spheres of life in order to bring this unique country back to the Lord, even among prisoners who need the love of the Lord so desperately."